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Civil Air Patrol Resumes Hunt for Missing Paraglider

CAP continues intense search for USAF Lieutenant Colonel, Reserves, Ronald Rosepink, test pilot at Edwards Air Force Base.

(Bakersfield, CA) – July 5, 2003 – Civil Air Patrol (CAP) today begins its fourth day assisting the Kern County Sheriff's Department in a search for missing Paraglider, Ronald Rosepink. He was reported missing by family late Tuesday evening when he failed to report in as expected.

In spite of intense efforts over the past three days, success still eludes searchers. The CAP will maintain it's established a primary mission base at the Bakersfield's Meadows Field airport, with a secondary base at the Tehachapi Muni airport, throughout the holiday weekend, and longer if necessary. Major James Porter is the CAP Base Incident Commander (IC) today.

Since beginning this search mission on Wednesday, the Civil Air Patrol has provided 232 hours of air search, 38 aircraft and about 139 volunteers, covering areas to Lake Isabella, which is about 20 miles out from the location of Rosepink's recovered auto. This fourth day into the search by Civil Air Patrol volunteers adds 13 CAP aircraft and crews, and 48 additional base support-staff.

As the lead agency for this team effort, the Kern County Sheriff's department is providing helicopter and the ground search effort. They ask that the public remain clear of the area to allow the professionals and search dogs unhindered space to do their job. The Civil Air Patrol ground teams are available and standing by if requested.

The fact that there was no flight plan, and there is no Emergency Location Transmitter (ELT) signal being received, which offers no homing device for the aircrews to track, makes this search even more difficult.

CAP Paraglider Search - *Continued*

It requires the CAP aircraft crews to do visual only grid searches in mountainous terrain, with dense shrub and forest, with intense scrutiny of the most probable flight path.

Though it will not be known what caused Rosepink's craft failure until he is found, there is good cause to expect a positive outcome. Rosepink, 46, is a USAF Lieutenant Colonel, Reserves, and has been well trained in survival technique, and is often at Edwards Air Force Base where he performs contract test flights. He is also considered somewhat of an icon to the ballooning community by his balloonist friends.

At the Great Reno Balloon Race, an invitation-only hot air balloon "races" event held each year after Labor Day, there is an event called *Community Launch* task were the pilots select their own launch sites and attempt to fly back to the Rancho San Rafael Park to throw their markers at the target, and attempt to grab a ring placed on a tall pole in the park.

"Ron Rosepink owns the Community Launch competition, relates a good friend, Gary Bruce Eaton, balloon pilot. 'Ron has won this event, and on several occasions he has grabbed the ring. He almost always finishes in the Top Three for this competition."

"In my opinion Ron is *The All American Boy*. He is at all times a true gentleman, and it is my honor to know and respect Ron over these past several years. The GRBR is a real treat because I know that Ron will be there, and it will be another opportunity to renew our friendship, "expressed Gary.

According to Gary, Rosepink has over 1,000 hours as Pilot in Command of the F-16 Viper Jet Fighter. The USAF confirmed that he also has time in the F-22 through his career as a test pilot in the USAF, and he is currently a contract test pilot at Edwards Air Force Base.

The essence of Gary's comments is clearly shown in the accompanying photo of retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager, Maj. Ron Rosepink, former "Good Morning America" host and Emmy award-winning documentary producer David Hartman and Capt. Vince Caterina, on the Edwards AFB flightline in 1991.

Ron, his wife Debbie, and their son and daughter currently live in Englewood, Colorado. Debbie and the children have remained present at the mission site awaiting positive news, along with friends and family that have joined in the search effort.

Anyone who might have seen this bright blue with pink wing tips Paraglider with about a 30 foot wingspan, and capable of ten miles or more flight, within the Black Mountain or surrounding area after its take off on June 28th, or has any additional information is asked to call the Kern County Sheriff's Office at 661/861-3110.

Civil Air Patrol (CAP), the official Auxiliary of the United States Air Force, is a nonprofit organization of approximately 64,000 members nationwide with approximately 4,000 members in California. It performs more than 95% of inland search and rescue missions in the continental United States as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center. CAP volunteers also perform homeland security, disaster relief and counter-drug missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. Recently, CAP members flew security over the launch site of the space shuttle Columbia and later assisted in the Columbia shuttle

CAP Paraglider Search - *Continued*

recovery. In the days after 9/11, California members flew blood products for the Red Cross when all commercial aviation was grounded. California alone had over 55 crews standing ready to be called into action. The CAP volunteers also take a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to almost 27,000 of America's youth through CAP Cadet Programs.

For additional information and follow-up, please contact Candice Tuttle, 1Lt, CAP, Mission Information Officer; Hm Tel: 650.326.5214, Email: Candice@LadyPIC.com

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Photo attached: Courtesy of Edwards Air Force Base Web Photo Gallery